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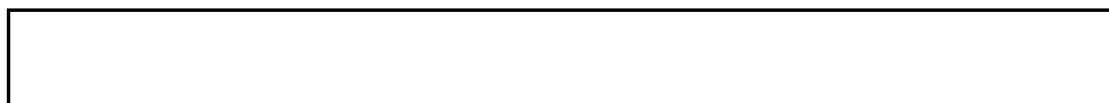
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West Germany Reviews Third World Policy

Bonn has decided to accelerate its basic review of West German policy toward the developing world as a result of the collapse of the Paris preparatory conference of oil producers and consumers. Chancellor Schmidt has long felt that present West German policy fails to take into account current political and economic realities, and the coalition partners have been under increasing pressure recently to make sure that development policy helps ensure West German access to vital raw materials.

In undertaking the policy review, Schmidt recognizes the futility of a continued stalemate in the dialogue between developed and developing states. The review will aim at finding a way to take the initiative away from the developing states, perhaps with counterproposals which skirt the objections of the industrialized states but nevertheless recognize some of the fundamental demands of the developing nations.

Under strong prodding from the Chancellor and with the support of Development Aid Minister Bahr, the Bonn government's policy review will reassess West German interests relating to energy, raw materials and overall relations with the Third World. The West Germans hope to develop positive proposals to assist the developing countries attain their goals by considering all the issues which these states had hoped to include in the agenda for a full conference after the Paris preparatory meeting. The present schedule calls for cabinet consideration of the policy review in mid-May--prior to the ministerial meetings of the International Energy Agency and the Organization for

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Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) scheduled for late May.

The review comes at a time when several other industrial states--including the US, the UK and the EC--are also reexamining their policies toward development, trade in raw materials and the United Nations. For more than a year there have been increasingly bitter disputes at the UN between developed and developing states during the course of which the Algerian-dominated coalition of developing states has forced adoption of a series of inflammatory resolutions most industrial states have rejected out of hand. The UN will hold another special session on development next September; at the CECD meeting in May the industrialized states, with the September meeting in mind, will try to strengthen further the common front they presented at the Paris energy meeting.

It is still too early to tell whether the German review will result in fundamental changes in West German policy toward the Third World. Of the West European nations, West Germany has been among the most conservative in its policy toward developing countries. It is clear, however, that the Development Aid ministry under the ambitious Bahr is making a determined effort to bring Bonn's policies more into line with the views of moderate developing states.

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